

The STEAM Journal

Volume 2
Issue 1 *Synapse*


Article 30

September 2015

Unseen Minutia

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Recommended Citation

Kapadia, Sara (2015) "Unseen Minutia," *The STEAM Journal*: Vol. 2: Iss. 1, Article 30. DOI: 10.5642/steam.20150201.30
Available at: <http://scholarship.claremont.edu/steam/vol2/iss1/30>

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STEAM is a bi-annual journal published by the Claremont Colleges Library | ISSN 2327-2074 | <http://scholarship.claremont.edu/steam>

Unseen Minutia

Abstract

A brief thought on the unseen details.

Author/Artist Bio

Sara Kapadia is the founder of The STEAM Journal. An artist and academic Sara blends her passions for the arts and sciences in her research, art practice, and work. Sara graduated from the University of Cambridge with a degree in science education, from the University of London with a degree in social justice and education, and from Claremont Graduate University with a PhD in education. Recently Sara completed a postdoctoral fellowship at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). More can be found about Sara's projects at www.sara.kapadia.com

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Unseen Minutia

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Unseen Minutia

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The ink and watercolor drawing I created above was inspired by the work of Louis Pasteur who observed in 1879 that:

“a swarm of vibrios, so active in their movements that the eye has great difficulty in following them. They may be seen in pairs throughout the field, apparently making efforts to separate from each other. The connection would seem to be by some invisible, gelatinous thread, which yields so far to their efforts that they succeed in breaking away from actual contact, but yet are, for a while, so far restrained that the movements of one have a visible effect on those of the other. By and by, however, we see a complete separation effected, and each moves on its separate way with an activity greater than it ever had before.”

(Pasteur, 1879, section v.)

The concept of that which is unseen is complex, there are aspects of the unseen that present actual physical evidence of existence... other aspects only exist in the imagination of an artist or scientist...again here we have layers of intricacy, some might expect science to be more concrete than art, but this is not always the case: a scientist may envision what is in the realm of the unseen by using laws of physics, and tried and tested theories... to find that in reality what was previously unseen is in fact completely different to what was expected., while an artist may conceive an idea in their mind's eye and through the creative process make it an actuality.

The minutia of our human world is infinitely immense, from firing synapse in our brain to air particles, we are surrounded and made of that which we cannot always see...